The PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

SEPTEMBER 1948

Christianity on the Offensive

By ALAN WALKER

All the Brothers Were Valiant

By BOYNTON MERRILL

What Are We Working For?

By CLARENCE E. LEMMON

The Three Stonecutters

By J. ROBERT GRAY

Choosing Your Way to Faith

By FRANKLIN D. ELMER

Teaching a Congregation to Worship

By WESLEY M. WESTERBERG

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Charles Clayton Morrison, *Editor*

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In the October Pulpit

Next month's Pulpit will contain a sermon by one of the new bishops of the Methodist Church. He is Gerald Kennedy who, until his election to his episcopal office was minister of the St. Paul Methodist Church, Lincoln.

A propos to the month of October is an offering by Norman V. Hope, of the faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary, dealing with "The Meaning of World Wide Communion Sunday."

The Pulpit also takes pleasure in presenting a sermon by one of the youngest generation of preachers in America today. It is entitled "Via Crucis," and is the winner of the Michael Wilson Keith Homiletics Prize at Western Theological Seminary this year. The author, Harry T. Hutchinson Jr., graduated from college this spring and enters seminary this month.

Clarence Edward Macartney provides us with a sermon well worth the attention of Pulpit readers. It is entitled, "The Sequence of Sin," while from the study of Carlin O. Basinger of Port Washington, Wis., comes a pulpit discourse dealing with the relation of "our philosophy of today," to the "culture of tomorrow."

Finally, the last but by no means the least of those to be mentioned is a sermon by Jack Finegan on "Pain and Progress."

There will, of course, be the usual features; more than a page of illustrations, a preacher problem article by Wesley M. Westerberg on worship, and the new Sermon review column, "Speaking of Sermons."

WHO'S WHO IN THIS ISSUE

Rev. Alan Walker, minister of the Waverly Methodist Church, Sydney, Australia, is prominent in his denomination as well as in civic affairs "down-under." He was a delegate at the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Mr. Walker is religious editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* and a speaker for the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

Pastor of the First Congregational Church, Columbus, Ohio, *Rev.* Boynton Merrill preached at the National Council of the Congregational and Christian Churches at Oberlin, Ohio, last June, when tension was high over the decision regarding union with the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Reference is made in this sermon to that debate.

Rev. Clarence E. Lemmon was for several years minister of the Hamilton Avenue Christian Church, St. Louis, and now heads the activities of the First Christian Church, Columbia, Mo., an important educational center.

A graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary and recipient of the degree, S.T.M. from Western Theological Seminary, *Rev.* J. Robert Gray is now studying for a Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh. He is at present pastor of Morningside Methodist Church in Pittsburgh.

Rev. Franklin D. Elmer is minister of the First Baptist Church, Flint, Mich. A graduate of Brown University and the University of Chicago, he was formerly pastor of the First Baptist Church, Lockport, N. Y.

The author of this month's children's sermon is Reuben P. Jeschke. He is on the faculty of the North American Baptist Seminary, Rochester, New York.

Rev. Frank Halliday Ferris, author of the pastoral prayer, is minister of the Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

A preacher of world note, *Rev.* Leslie D. Weatherhead is pastor of the City Temple in London. The excerpt offered in this issue of the Pulpit is from a sermon preached there.

Gerda Schairer writes on behalf of the committee on world friendship among children sponsored by C.W.S.

Rev. Wesley M. Westerberg is minister of the First Methodist Church, Naperville, Ill. A former teacher at Evanston Collegiate Institute, Evanston, Ill., he is a graduate of Yale Divinity School. Mr. Westerberg studied abroad for one year in Sweden.

Rector of Christ Episcopal Church of Oswego, N. Y., since 1943, *Rev.* Frederick W. Kates is a columnist in the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, Rochester, N. Y.

Rev. Marshall Wingfield, an old friend to readers of the *Christian Century* and the Pulpit, is minister of the First Congregational Church, Memphis, Tenn.

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

AMERICAN democracy has gone into action on its widest front. Of course, it operates constantly in all years between presidential elections, but less visibly, because the people have committed the responsibility for political decisions to their representatives. But once every four years the "consent of the governed" is sought and the most momentous issues have to be decided by the people themselves. These decisions are made by means of party platforms in which the issues are stated and sides are taken. This is the theory. But in practice, it is the candidates, their records and the records of their respective parties, and the policies they announce on the stump that appeal most directly to the voters. This time the party system is divided into four parties, an unfavorable grouping for a clear expression of the national will. The emergence of multiple organized blocs in our population is an invitation to multiply political parties which tend to stymie legislation and weaken democracy, as in France. The exploitation of these blocs by candidates and parties not only invites demagogy, but complicates the system with cross purposes. Thus the democratic principle of majority rule may be tested in this campaign as in no previous one. The party conventions have all been held, the candidates nominated and some, but not all, of the issues defined. However, as the campaign proceeds on the hustings the issues may be more sharply clarified.

The Quadrennial Campaign Is On!

The Book of the Month

THE SHAKING OF THE FOUNDATIONS, *by Paul Tillich. Scribners.* $2.50.

I LIKE to hear a theologian preach. And I like to read his sermons. As a preacher he is under constraint of his own intellectual integrity in a degree that the parish preacher does not feel so keenly. The vocational preacher is likely to be more preoccupied with the object or purpose of his sermon than with its subject. Besides, nine out of ten of us preachers have only vague and unsystematic theological ideas. We are therefore not so sensitive to conceptual inconsistencies in our message. In the case of the theologian, however, his sermon is grounded in his theology, and must be consistent with it. He conceives his message as an attempt to set forth his deepest thought in simpler and warmer terms than he is accustomed to use in the classroom or in a formal treatise. This, manifestly, is the spirit in which Professor Tillich conceived these sermons and delivered them in the chapel of Union Theological Seminary. I can imagine his own students listening with wrapt attention in the hope of catching some clearer insight into the profundities and complexities of the preacher's classroom lectures. In a sermon, the theologian's theology comes up from the depths to the surface. His sermon is the flowering of his theology. Even so, these sermons are none too easy reading, but they do help one to a better understanding of the kind of a teacher whose influence is widely felt in the modern church. Personally, I have found them so, and any one who has wrestled with Professor Tillich's other books will find new light in this one.

A Thought for the Month

THE PROBLEM at the heart and root of the world's troubles is a religious problem. But we make a mistake when we imagine that Christianity's task is therefore to get mankind to be more religious. Man is already religious enough. His religion is really the cause of the world's troubles. Religion is not necessarily good. There is bad religion as well as good religion, demonic religion as well as divine religion. The world's troubles arise from the fact that man's religiousness is oriented toward false gods. Modern wars are caused by bad religions. Man's latest religion is nationalism. It has taken the form of racism, fascism, state Shintonism, sovietism. Each of these is a religion, fitted out with a cultus, a body of dogma and a supreme object of devotion—the national state. There is also a religion calling itself humanism which, denying the Christian God, sets up a god of its own whose name is Man. Christianity affirms that all these are false religions, bad religions, because their gods are idols, the work of man's hands or of his darkened imagination. They deify race or class or an ancient culture or the nation of man himself. These false religions are the trouble-makers of the world. When therefore we say that the root of the world's troubles is a religious problem, we can only mean that it is the problem of getting rid of bad religions. But the only way to get rid of a bad religion is by the introduction of a true and good religion. There is only one religion that can drive out the bad ones. This is Christianity. To this the false religions themselves bear witness by their hostility to Christianity which exposes their true inwardness and reveals them as the most formidable cause of the world's troubles.

Religion Good and Bad

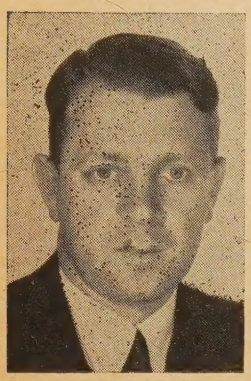
Charles Clayton Morrison

Christianity on the Offensive

By ALAN WALKER

I am the resurrection and the life. John 11:25.

IT IS two hundred years since conditions were as favorable as today for the launching of a Christian offensive throughout the world. Slowly through the last twenty-five years the climate of opinion and attitude has changed. Under the successive blows of war, depression, war again, and now the disappointments of a new peace, man's confidence has been shaken. Much that he believed in—automatic progress, science, utopianism, even education—has been proved wanting. Arrogance and self-trust are beginning to disappear. A vacuum in faith is revealing itself. We are living amid the twilight of the gods.



With this large-scale collapse of alternative faiths the door swings open in a new way for the advancement of the Christian message. A time of tremendous and almost unique opportunity has come to the Christian church.

PAUL'S CHALLENGE IN ATHENS

It was this kind of situation which the Apostle Paul found at Athens. Athens, in that first century, was a proud and beautiful city, a world center for knowledge and the arts. It had been a religious city, for its streets, as Paul soon discovered, were rich with statues to the gods and goddesses of the Greco-Roman world. But they were relics of a faith that had died. No longer were they regarded as representing the gods of Olympus, for such gods were now believed to be no more than the heroes of pleasant fables. As a consequence Athens had become a purposeless, cynical place, with the inevitable consequences of such attitudes already apparent. Sexual license and corruption had spread among the people. Athens was an empty city knowing only the sorrows of a dead faith.

All this Paul sensed as he walked its streets and talked with the people. The account in Acts says: "His spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry." Thus beginning in the streets and the synagogues, and at last on Mars Hill itself, he proclaimed his new faith, faith in the risen Christ. Realizing the opportunity which a city in such a condition represented, he went over to the attack. He became the spearhead of a Christian offensive.

And what were the weapons he used? They were the facts of the Christian story. He proclaimed the historic faith of Jesus. He simply told the story of One who came to Bethlehem, who lived and taught in Palestine, who died for all men at Calvary and who on the third day rose from the dead. It was in the might of these facts that he challenged a city.

For the Christian offensive in the midyears of this twentieth century, the church has at hand these same "swords of the spirit." In the central truths of the Christian faith are to be found peculiarly relevant answers to the very needs of our time. We too may go forward in the power of the four great facts of our faith—the Incarnation, the life of Jesus, the Cross and the Resurrection. These are the very truths which—to quote George Fox—"answer our condition."

INCARNATION SHOWS GOD'S PURPOSE

The Incarnation is God's declaration that history has a purpose. It is more than the coming of another child to another mother. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." It represents meaningfulness at the heart of the universe.

It is this fact which so many today have ceased to accept. Life, for them, has lost all sense of purpose and direction. It has become a series of meaningless events with nothing at the end of the road either for the race as a whole or for the individuals who compose it. Despair has become a dominant attitude and a major problem.

The fact that mankind has entered an age of despair, with the earlier optimism of this century sounding increasingly silly and empty, can be illustrated from the last writings of H. G. Wells. He significantly titled his last book *Mind at the End of Its Tether.* In it he says: "The end of everything is close at hand and cannot be evaded. There is no way out or round or through the impasse. It is the end. Our universe is not merely bankrupt, it is going clear out of existence. The attempt to trace a pattern of any kind is absolutely futile." Again, he describes our civilization as "a convoy lost in darkness on an unknown rocky coast, with quarreling pirates in the chartroom and savages clambering up the sides of the ships to plunder or to do evil as the whim may take them." The priest of progress has become the prophet of doom with a vengeance!

PESSIMISM CARRIES PERILS

This type of mood of course carries serious perils for the human family. Despair can easily eat out the will to effort, for unless a man believes that there is some purpose in trying to solve his problems he is less likely to conquer his difficulties. Despair can so easily lead on to irresponsibility, even to reckless-

ness. If man is convinced that nothing can stop the dread disintegration of his society the whole process is likely to be accelerated. Thus an age of despair could become a bleak age in which men live an unreal day-to-day existence without any touch of those utterly necessary elements of faith and hope and even of love.

The Christian alone has the answer to this mood, for he alone knows a God who has revealed that history has a purpose and the wide struggle of men a destination. And it is the Incarnation which focuses for him that confidence. It reveals a grand plan for mankind, one that encompasses the centuries. It draws aside the veil and shows meaning, purpose at the very center of reality. And it claims that every individual person is related to that master design. Every man counts. It gives more than a basis for a philosophy of history: it gives a faith to live by for every one of us. The Incarnation lights up matter, it illumines history, it gives hope to the mind. It is why at this hour the story of the coming of Jesus to Bethlehem must be a strong weapon confidently wielded in our hands as we take the offensive in a bewildered and despairing world.

The life of Jesus is a second weapon for our warfare. That distinctive personality with gentleness and strength strangely intermingled, with purity and restraint as dominant characteristics, with courage and devotion such as the world has never seen, also provides a message for this hour. The Christian way of life as revealed supremely in the life of Jesus can be taken also to a world of confused and doubtful men.

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS

We have lived through a period when other ways of living have been on the offensive. The ruthless man, as proclaimed by Nietzsche and made incarnate in Hitler, has had an appeal far beyond the borders of nazi Germany. The selfish man with his immoral slogan "business is business" has been seen wherever under capitalism commerce has been conducted. The sensual man, encouraged so often by a false psychology and aided by the spirit of disillusion, has been able to do almost as he wished. Before such onslaughts the quiet beauty and wholesomeness of Jesus and Christian virtues of character have seemed helpless.

Here again time has brought its corrections. The conscience of the world has been profoundly shocked by the evils which in war and peace the ruthless man can perpetrate. A social and economic order which placed a premium on selfishness is increasingly standing condemned because of its own failures to meet the needs of all the people. And sensualism, while still accepted by hosts of people as the highway to happiness, is wide open to attack.

Take one example. Oscar Wilde in his later years could be regarded as sensualism in action. Yet where did it lead him? As the "darling of English society" his genius had brought almost all things to his feet. But then came the excesses and the collapse, the tragic trial, exile and death in disease and shame. And what was the explanation of his decline and fall? "I let myself be lured into long spells of senseless and sensual practices," he admitted. "Tired of being on the heights I deliberately held to the depths in search of new sensations." There is the revealing clue—"in search of new sensations." A satisfaction built upon the stimulation of the senses can be maintained only by ever increasing excitement of those senses. In the end the ordinary pales and the extraordinary beckons. At last there is no stimulus sufficient to satisfy tired and satiated senses.

THE WORLD NEEDS TENDERNESS

Into this kind of world comes the Christ. The world cries out for a tenderness which shall soften the harshness of its selfishness and the cruelty that has come from its ruthlessness. It yearns for a peace which the flesh can never give. In the life and teaching of Jesus there can again be advanced a relevant, powerful word. It is another of the weapons with which this present age can be attacked in a Christian offensive. We can offer One who is "the way . . . and the life."

"Christ crucified" was also Paul's weapon of attack in that ancient world. Soon after the infant church began moving out on its immense tasks in that alien world, this message of the cross of Jesus became dominant. It is still a message for a lost world. It is still a sharp sword for our warfare.

Modern man is in the process of rediscovering the fact and the power of sin. Again an acknowledged intellectual leader can be quoted. C. E. M. Joad now says: "Evil cannot be written off as a mere by-product of circumstances. I see now that it is endemic to man." As men everywhere have looked with horror into the concentration camps and have slowly realized that the ruthlessness of such treaties as Potsdam and the dropping of the atomic bomb as an "experiment" on a large city and the growing evidence of the tyranny of Soviet Russia show that evil is by no means the exclusive property of a nazi way of life, a new mood is spreading round the earth. "What must we do to be saved?" is a question we shall hear more of as the days go by.

EDUCATION IS NOT THE ANSWER

The answer still given with unwarranted confidence is—education. With knowledge sin can be worked out of the human soul, so it is claimed. The Christian knows better. He repeats with Emil Brunner an undeniable conviction: "If man evolves, and he certainly does evolve, the process of evolution does not affect the character of sin. . . . It is not an evolving out of sin but within sin. If man rises to higher levels of intellectual or cultural life, so does sin. It follows him like a shadow."

Where then can deliverance be found? The Christian says roundly, with the evidence of a million

hearts in support— at the cross of Jesus. There is the power which begets humility and penitence. There we discover what sin may do. There we find the grace of God sufficient to "cover all our sin." There is the hope of this and every age.

G. K. Chesterton once said that there would be no hope for Europe and the world until into its ceaseless cycle of war, defeat, resentment and war a cross was again thrown. He was warning us surely that into a world of hate and bitterness there must come the strange gospel of forgiveness, that into a world which still holds to its fatal trust in armed might and what it can do there must be injected a realization of the power of love, of active good will. In a word, the way of the cross is the way of hope.

William Temple was apparently prepared to attempt this way. It is said that before he died he had already planned the act of worship to be used in the thanksgiving service which he knew would follow the end of hostilities. After an opening given to the praise of God and his goodness, the archbishop intended that the whole emphasis should pass over to confession and penitence. He wished that the people should repeat the fifty-first Psalm: "I acknowledged my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned. . . . Hide Thy face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways."

Dr. Temple knew that the pride of victory could so easily put into motion again the old cycle which once more could end only in war. Thus into it he intended to throw a cross. He knew the evil logic—no repentance in the victors, no influence with the vanquished, and no new world of peace.

The cross of Jesus—humility, penitence, trust in the power of love—is the hope of this world. It makes another weapon of our warfare.

THE POWER OF THE RESURRECTION

Finally, there is no doubt that the first message with which the early church confronted the world of its day was: "On the third day Jesus rose from the dead as the scripture hath said." Certainly it was this message which marked Paul's climax on Mars Hill. "He hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead."

No wonder it was Paul's greatest message! If we look at it this way the wonder of it all may break on us again. What if it is true that a man did conquer death? What if it is a fact that the tomb was empty? What if Jesus did triumph after evil had done its worst? Why, if it is true, then the thinking of every man about himself and his loved ones must be wondrously altered. And the attitude of every man to all that happens around him must likewise undergo a startling, revolutionary transformation. It is simply impossible that the world could ever be the same again. If it is true all history is altered and every human calculation must be adjusted. If Jesus rose, then our whole approach to chaos and darkness in the world about us is revolutionized.

It is the unbelievable privilege of the Christian as he moves out into the world today, as in every age, to say it is true—and to be absolutely certain about it. This is the essence of the gospel. All that Christianity stands for depends on the authenticity of this claim: "He is risen, as he said."

Out into a world where men still fear death as ever they did, out into an age which sees hopes deferred as slowly, so slowly, the chaos of war is left behind, the Christian can go with hope and promise. He alone can be sure that death is not the end. He alone can be certain that beyond the ruin of these bitter years can be a new day. And it is this twofold message that becomes a weapon for his warfare.

THE FINAL VICTORY

The triumph of Christ and its significance for us came home to me vividly as, some time ago, I read of the passing of Pastor Friedrich Bodelschwingh in Germany. Fifty years ago this saintly man began his Christlike work of caring for epileptic sufferers. By the beginning of the war two thousand persons were in his care. How he worked and fought for them! Once, when Hitler decreed that all invalids should be killed, this German pastor defied him and saved his people. But then, with the war over, worn out by his long struggle he died. At his funeral the Christian message of triumph was obviously present. His choir of epileptics sang triumphantly; reference was made to his victory over Hitler; a British chaplain was present, crossing the gulf of war, speaking words of comfort and bringing a floral gift, symbol of the sympathy and love of the World Church. And from the preacher came the message: "I am the resurrection and the life." There, it seems to me, in that one incident, was focused the message which, in the triumph of Christ over death, the Christian has for the world of today.

In the last analysis it is in the power of the resurrection that the Christian forces of the world can and must take the offensive!

The Church Misses the Boat

THE CHURCH has done its job and does it increasingly well, in serving humans who face the problems of birth and death and sickness and sorrow, who struggle with their children and their family relations and the worry of the daily troubles of existence.

But in meeting the problems laymen face in responsible leadership of their communities in business and politics and labor and agriculture, the church has missed the boat entirely.

CHARLES P. TAFT.

THE WORLD is not done with Jesus Christ, but it is done without him. BISHOP A. J. MOORE.

All the Brothers Were Valiant

By BOYNTON MERRILL

Except your brother be with you, ye shall not even see my face. Genesis 43:3.

THE STORY of Joseph and his brethren is one of the world's greatest, and surely it is one of the world's best-told, stories. The beautifully written chapters have plot and to spare. Dramatic events follow each other in swift succession. Each episode ending leaves the reader half way into another, drawing him on irresistibly. Cruelty and pathos, kings and slaves, caravans and banquets, a beautiful woman scorned and furious: all these are here. We have here, too, perhaps the first appearance of the "rags to riches" theme; for the young here climbs from a pit and slavery into a princedom and great power.

Wonderful dignities are here. Death is met with beautiful calmness. The tender love of an aged, sorrowing father, like the music of muted violins, sweetens and saddens the story from first to last. And, over it all, like the light one sometimes sees cast over a late summer afternoon, lies the mellow light of a brother's forgiving love, unequaled, so far as I know, anywhere in all literature.

JOSEPH'S TERMS

Now let me lift one episode out of the many, and underscore one sentence only. Joseph, sold by his jealous brothers down into Egyptian slavery, has become, in the course of the years, very great. His aged father, Jacob, and his brothers far to the north back up in Canaan are, for the second time, in the grip of a fearful famine. Once before Joseph, out of his forgiving love and Egypt's plenty, has given them corn, but now the corn is gone and death stalks them once more. Jacob, like his sons, not dreaming that the mighty governor of Egypt is the boy who had worn the coat of many colors, would have them go down once more for corn.

But they are slow to go; for Joseph, knowing well who they were and longing greatly to see his own blood brother Benjamin, had charged them on their first visit never to come back again into Egypt unless Benjamin were with them. And Jacob, having lost Joseph, dearly cherished and greatly feared for his youngest brother. But, at last, the brothers told their father why they were loath to go: "Thus did the man in Egypt say to us, 'except your brother be with you, ye shall not even see my face.' "

And Jacob feared to lose Benjamin and he grieved. But hunger knows no relenting and, at last, the aged man consented. "Take thy brother and go: if I am to be bereaved, then, I am bereaved." And they took presents, and the boy and they went down into Egypt and they stood for the second time, suppliant, before Joseph.

"Except your brother be with you ye shall not even see my face." It is more than a sentence out of an ancient story. It is more than a glimpse of a man's loneliness. This is more than an autocratic condition laid down by an oriental potentate.

A TRACT FOR OUR TIME

It is a swift, searing flash of light falling across the darkness wherein men grope toward the Kingdom of God. It is a tract, in thirteen words, for all time, and peculiarly for our time. It is the brief, unforgettable statement of a condition which must be met if the race is ever to be delivered from disasters more persistent and widespread than any or all famines. Jacob and his sons in ancient Canaan were faced with dismay; so, too, are we; and like them we, too, need help. We, too, would find a happy issue out of our troubles; but we will not even look upon the face of happiness except our brother be with us to look upon it. "Thus did the man in Egypt say to us, 'except your brother be with you, ye shall not even see my face.' "

Joseph, powerful, was to his starving brothers plenty; he was light to them in the midst of their darkness; he was life to men who were face to face with death; he was hope to men who were otherwise hopeless.

Let him be to us today, as he was to them, a symbol for rescue from our distresses, for strength, for concord in our confusion, for the good life, for the will of God loved and done. Between us and these things on which our hearts are set there stands an angel with a flaming sword and on the sword may well be burnished the words, "except your brother be with you, ye shall not pass, ye shall not even see the things desired."

WHAT JOSEPH MEANS TODAY

Look at Joseph in that realm in which men toil, perhaps, half their lives away. In the economic realm, he is at the very least a full dinner pail, and a roof tight against the rain and a bed tenderly smoothed on which to die. He is men of every race and color laboring together, proudly joining their skills, giving an honest day's work for an honest day's pay. He is our vast, natural resources and the profits of the toil of all widely and fairly shared. He is a vast fortune ever replenished out of God's inexhaustible treasury and man's toiling to be used and used again to enhance the living, to increase the dignity,

and to secure the joy, not of a few, but of all.

But there is a fearful famine upon us even in this land of plenty. The hot winds of cherished bitternesses, the locusts of greed, the dust of jealousies still plague us. And we shall not come to the end of them nor come to the land of economic peace and plenty until all of us, strong and weak, rich and poor, wise and not-so-wise, come, at least, to this common mind: we must and we will take our brother with us. Joseph is industrial peace, economic justice, the end of shameful poverties; we shall not look upon his face "except our brother" be with us. But do it, and we shall be as were the brothers standing before Joseph with all the granaries of Egypt at his back.

JOSEPH MEANS KNOWLEDGE

Come over into that vast effort to secure what George A. Gordon used to call "the right mind"—the area of education. Joseph becomes the steady climb out of illiteracy and ignorance. He becomes an informed, intellectually alert, morally sensitive citizenry. He becomes in this country a nation of men aware of the great principles upon which these states were founded; and aware, too, of the restraint and vigilance, of the toil and daring necessary, if these are to endure into and bless the future. He becomes a system of public and private education in which the inculcation of moral principles is considered of primary importance and in which the hard won, well-tested common persuasions of religion are not belittled. He becomes an educational process where no doors are barred to those equipped by nature to walk through them. He becomes a social order chivalric and farsighted enough, for instance, to permit men and women of every creed and color to study and train in our best medical schools and hospitals that they may become doctors and nurses thoroughly prepared to relieve suffering, to hold back death and stamp out disease wherever these raise their heads.

Joseph becomes a whole people climbing consciously toward an aristocracy, not of birth or wealth, but of wisdom, of selfless service and of character. Yes, Joseph is highminded education, denied to none, equipping all, evoking the best. But unless our brother be with us as we press toward these things, we may possibly catch a glimpse of knowledge but the face of wisdom will be turned away. And, powers and skills acquired, if we forget our brothers in the use of them, will work us ill, not good. Therefore, "take thy brother with thee."

Look at Joseph in the social and civic fabric of our time. He is the clean, safe city. He is public health and playgrounds. He is the absence of slums not yet cleared away because selfish men can make conscienceless profits out of the underprivileged and the weak. He is homes made possible for men who dwelt for months and years in swamps and foxholes that our homes might be preserved and who now live in shacks and cellars, to their hurt and to our shame. He is youth catching visions of and adventuring toward a warless world; and he is men of maturity refusing to scoff at their dreams, knowing full well that the stuff of today's dreams can become tomorrow's steel and granite. Joseph is the teaching of Jesus taken serioiusly, especially by those who claim to be his followers. But, with the attainment of public righteousness, it is as it is with the doing of economic justice and the achieving of the right mind; except we take our brother with us as we go we shall not even look upon its face.

And, now, how is it when we seek to stand before Joseph, our symbol of achievement and power, in the church?

Surely he is, first of all, the church steadfastly sure of God! He is the church, like her founder, declaring, "I can of mine own self do nothing," but also echoing Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." He is the church facing a world swollen with pride and saying: "I, too, am proud; I am proud of the gospel of Christ." And that gospel was not so much a matchless teacher's declaration about the indwelling of the spirit of the living God as it was, in the very midst of life, a matchless soul's matchless demonstration of what can happen when the indwelling God is acknowledged and obeyed. It was more than twenty years ago that Johnston Ross wrote: "I must remember that my life is derived; I must remember from whence; I must behave accordingly."

Joseph is the church which never forgets that. He is the church which is forever pressing back through human nature to discover and disclose the divine nature, which is ever pointing past man's inevitable limitations to his illimitable possibilities.

Joseph is the church, then, whose central certainty is the ever present love of God, whose head and heart are humbly bowed before the eternal Christ, whose great concern is that the soul of man shall be continuously confronted with God, and by that confrontation led to love and do its Creator's will. That church will be an embattled church but a steadfast one. It will be militant but full of tender compassions. It will be a moral and spiritual fortress with its feet on earth and in time but with its lofty battlements in heaven. Such a church as this is the only institution under God's blue sky able to meet the soul famine of the modern world.

WE MUST MEND OUR WAYS

But before these things can be, the church must do more than talk of her past power or dream of her future glory: she must confess her present sins and amend her foolish ways. She must hear again the great lament of the prophet: "O that thou hadst harkened to my commandments, then had thy peace been like a river and thy righteousness like the waves of the sea."

Our peace today is not like a river. Our righteousness and our concern for righteousness are at low ebb. The church is divided and distraught. These

sad things are so because we are seeking to save our small life; we seem afraid to lay it down; we seem to be afraid that God is not able to lift it up again in greater strength, a unified church.

Not once, I think, in four days at the General Council of our denomination, has the cross of Christ been lifted up in this great hall. Perhaps we do not need a physical cross which could be seen and which could conceivably touch our hearts; but I wonder if it could be that the very absence of a physical cross, which might be seen and touched, is an awesome portent, a terrifying revelation, that the spiritual cross is not here either! Not in our hearts; not in our minds; not in our purposes! There are bitternesses among us, my brothers, and they must be got rid of! Like the heavy burden which weighed down Bunyan's pilgrim we must cut them loose and let them roll, like his, into the dark cavern at the foot of the cross.

The eyes of the secular world will be caught and the hard heart of the world will be softened, and wooed and won, only when as quarreling brothers we recall our brotherhood and "live accordingly." The eyes of the world will turn our way when, and only when, we are united—not to glory in the small splendors of our own yesterdays, but to bring glory to Christ who counted not his own life too dear a thing to give it over utterly into God's keeping.

When we are ready, first to be reconciled to our brothers, and then, with them, to lose our united life in the larger life which waits, we will find that we have not lost our life at all and that, under God, we cannot lose it. When the churches of this world are ready to become the Church of Christ, not in name only but in deed and in truth, then will the world, sick with the lack of love and surfeited with hate, know where to turn for healing.

When we become, before men and before God, so spiritually meek that we cease to point at our several separate selves and will come humbly—*all the brothers being valiant enough to be humble*—into the unity of the spirit before the throne of grace, then, and only then, will the blight that threatens us be removed. We today need nothing quite so much as to go down on our knees and to ask God to create a right spirit within us. We would look, and we would help the world to look, upon the glory of God in the face of Christ, but unless we go as brothers, I taking you, and you taking me, we will not even see his face nor the glory of it. "Blessed are the pure in heart": it is they who shall see God!

We must meet the two anciently laid down conditions: first, of Christ, that whosoever would love God must love his brother also. Then we must go out to meet our other brothers in the other churches of the world who, like us, long to be made whole and who, like us, long to be saved from their distresses. Then together, united as were the twelve sons of Jacob, we will find storehouses greater than the storehouses of Egypt, even the storehouses of heaven, set wide before us. Neither will the Keeper of them turn his face away!

The Landmark

A Sermon for Children by Reuben P. Jeschke

ALL of us are accustomed to seeing certain familiar sights and buildings around us. We work or live in them, see them very often perhaps, or maybe like them for some special reason. Best known to you, no doubt, is your home. Your school, probably comes next. Your church, the library where you go, and possibly some large buildings downtown, belong into that group. If you are out-of-doors any amount of time there may be certain trees, roads, hills or lakes which you know especially well. Somehow, all these things become a very part of your life. It makes you feel good just to know that they are there.

My older sister and I had a landmark like that which I remember clearly to this day. In the pasture, along the path where she and I walked over two miles to school, there was a very large stone. I suppose it should be called a boulder. It was almost as tall as a man. At least two people would have had to join their hands to reach around it. Beside it the ground looked pushed-down, as though this stone had been thrown with great speed from the skies down to the earth at some time very long ago.

It would be hard for me to tell you how much that great rock meant to us children. The sides had rough places, so that we could climb it. Almost every day we would do that—to look around! Since it was on a low hill, about half way to school, we were always glad to see it come into sight and glad when we arrived. We would stop there to rest; at times we played beside it. There was something so big, so strong, so lasting, so dependable—yes, and even friendly—about it for us that we always felt good because it was there. Some fifteen years after we had moved away I visited the place again: it still made me feel good.

Isaiah, a great prophet of God, living about seven hundred years before the day of Jesus, also had something to say about a mighty rock. He was looking forward to a distant time when people would become upright and good. In that day, said he, a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind. . . . "as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." He was thinking of some large boulder in a barren,

desert country. Beside it people could find shelter from the strong desert winds. Especially could they rest in its shade, and so escape the burning heat of the sun. Or, to put it another way, a good person must be strong, protecting, dependable, like some great rock.

It makes us feel happy to have things around us that seem so sure: homes, schools, churches, or the sights of nature. Even more are we happy to have people about us on whom we can depend to do right, to tell the truth, to be kind. We ought to be thankful that there are such people in the world, people who are as the great rock which I myself liked so well. When they begin to think about it, many boys and girls find that they too want to become people like that.

What Are We Working For?

By CLARENCE E. LEMMON

For the people had a mind to work. Nehemiah 4:6c

AS WE APPROACH this Labor Sunday of 1948 I have been drawn to the work of the Old Testament builder, Nehemiah. This man lived 450 years before Christ and was a Jew who had become a court official for the king of Persia. He had heard about the plight of Jerusalem with its broken walls, its ruined temple and its scattered people. He longed to see the city rebuilt and persuaded the king to permit him to go back to see what might be done in the way of reconstruction. It is a moving story which we read in this book of Nehemiah, of this brave man going out in the darkness of the night to survey the broken walls and resolving to lead his people in the work of rebuilding. Against many difficulties they began their work. Nehemiah's leadership, enthusiasm and character had much to do with the success of one of the noblest enterprises which we have chronicled in our Old Testament.

In this story of the experiences of Nehemiah and his people in the rebuilding of Jerusalem one finds many interesting parallels to our own day. There our four points I would stress: 1. It was basically a work of physical reconstruction. 2. It was a work requiring the acceptance of individual responsibility. 3. It was a task performed under dangerous circumstances. 4. It was a physical task accompanied by social and spiritual rebuilding.

A HUGE TASK OF REBUILDING

To rebuild the walls of Jerusalem was hard work, a strenuous physical task, requiring good leadership, wide cooperation and enthusiastic effort.

On this Labor Day, a little more than three years after the war is over, we find ourselves facing a huge task of rebuilding and reconstruction. This task is worldwide. In Europe it means the rebuilding of broken cities, ruined transportation and shattered industry. It may take several generations to do this work of rehabilitation. The sheer physical effort required to restore what has been wrecked by war is enormous.

Not a single bomb dropped on America during the war and yet we have a vast amount of work to do. Take the one problem of housing. For five years we built no houses and old houses were wearing out and others becoming obsolete. During the five-year period of the war there was an increase in the number of family units and a consequent need for new housing. Just to bring our housing up to date and make it fairly adequate for our needs would be a job for nearly every worker in the nation. Our utilities need to be rebuilt, our schools enlarged, our hospital facilities increased, our city slums replaced, the soil on our farms restored, railway and shipping developed; and machinery to do all this must be fabricated. The work needed to be done in America is enormous. We all have work to do.

NO HOUR FOR IDLERS

It was said of the Jews under the leadership of Nehemiah that they were succeeding because "they had a mind to work." This too may be said of Americans. We are not a lazy people. We have many faults as Americans but it cannot be said that we are unwilling to work. A few years ago Henry Wallace wrote a book which he called *Sixty Million Jobs*. Our labor statisticians had figured that by this time we would have seven or eight million unemployed. Fortunately they have been proved wrong, for our people have had a mind to work. This is no time for lazy men. This no hour for idlers. This is no day for the shirker. Our generation is challenged by its need of workers.

In the second place, in order to rebuild the wall the work had to be broken down into small units and individuals and families were required to accept responsibility. This Old Testament account is an interesting narrative of social rebuilding. Nehemiah separated his workers by family units and gave to each family a section of the wall for which it was responsible. His workers were not only engaged in

a big social enterprise but each man had his own individual place in the rebuilding of the wall. They were inspired by the total project and yet each one felt a sense of responsibility for the work.

Our world is so big, our tasks so multiple, our vocations so numerous, that it is difficult for each man to visualize his own place in the whole scheme of things. It is comparatively simple to build a wall about a city but when it comes to the work of rehabilitating a complex social order such as ours it is not so simple. It requires imagination on the part of the individual for him to see his part in the total work. But while this is so, the converse is also true. The very complexity of our social order makes all our work interdependent. If one man fails at his task hundreds of workers are thrown out of adjustment. The lack of one material or of one group of workers in a vast factory may close the entire plant. Therefore it is important that each man do his task well. Perhaps the most important contribution the individual can make at this time is to feel his own importance in the total scheme of things. If you don't build your share of the wall a breach will be left through which the enemies of the city may enter.

There is implied in the scriptural narrative of Nehemiah rebuilding the wall a spiritual dedication. Every stone lifted into its place was an act of worship. Every bit of mortar put in its place was an act of reverence. This is our great spiritual need today. We need to be dedicated to a sense of the spiritual nature of vocation. In a world such as ours, if we are to have a Christian social order all work that is worthy must be dedicated to the common good. It must not be considered secular but sacred. The farmer at the plow, the teacher at the desk, the woman in the kitchen, the merchant at his counter, the worker in the factory, the salesman in his car, the foreman with his blueprints are all doing the work of God. We must wipe out this distinction between the sacred and the secular. All work that tends to the common good is sacred.

REBUILDING IN DANGEROUS TIMES

There is a third parallel to our times in the efforts of Nehemiah to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. The work had to be done in dangerous times. The enemies of the Jews were always round about the city to compromise and threaten them. The situation became so threatening that the workers had to take the trowel in one hand and a spear in the other. They not only had to accept the toil of performing the labor but at the same time were compelled to defend themselves. It was an exasperating and treacherous time in which to work.

Work in the midst of danger seems to be our lot today. It would be a heavy burden on our generation merely to do the work of reconstruction. But it seems that we are destined to do that work in a time of uncertainty and danger. Desperately needing tranquillity we find ourselves in the atmosphere of fear and treachery. At the same time we are spending our billions for the production of goods to rehabilitate the world, we are called upon to spend as many or more billions for what is termed "national defense." Thus in our day, as in the time of these ancient Jews, we carry the double burden of hard work and dangerous times.

When in the midst of the terrifying blitzkrieg early in the war Winston Churchill called England to a brave resistance by saying, "Let it be said that this is Britain's finest hour," he did not reckon with the sad, bleak and troublesome days which would be the aftermath of Britain's war. He could not foresee the continuation of rationing, the crowding, the poverty of the people. He could scarcely have imagined that it would be even more troublesome to get the support of the British people for the period when work and worry should go hand in hand without the stimulus of mighty battle to call them to courage. It is this combination that the peoples of the world must face today.

THE TASK OF MORAL REDEMPTION

In the fourth place, it is important for us to note that in the days of Nehemiah the people interpreted their task not only as one of physical effort but also one of moral redemption and renovation. The leaders of that day attempted to do two things at once: to rebuild the walls, and to repair their broken laws and redeem the people from moral decay. The people had forgotten ancient codes, had neglected their worship, and had corrupted their holy customs. Nehemiah seems to have moved in three directions in this moral renovation.

First, there was the restoration of the law. Nehemiah brought the people back to the laws of Moses and began to teach them once more. There was a revival of moral teaching. Certainly this has a lesson for our day. The work of rehabilitating broken cities is only a part of our task. The decay of morality, both private and public, the breakdown of the family, corruption in government, cynicism in politics, the lack of a recognized code in international dealings, all indicate the great need of moral rehabilitation. Since the rise of Hitler, fifteen years ago, the world has been fed on cynicism, on a wicked diet of hatred, prejudice and evil, until it is difficult for us to think clearly in terms of righteousness and justice.

Second, there was the recovery of worship. When the temple had been restored the people were called to God. They resumed their festivals of worship.

A recent visitor in Germany reports that the churches there are filled. In the midst of frustration and defeat the people are going back to the God of Martin Luther. Nothing like that has happened in America. It must happen, for the American people need to know that the universe belongs to God. The destiny of America should not be placed in the hands of the politicians and generals, but in the hands of God. Unless we can restore, in the midst of the confusion of our day, the consciousness of God in our

experience and in the conduct of our lives and of our nation we are doomed to frustration and defeat. With an opportunity for one of the most creative periods in our American life we can lose the way without God.

Third, there was the restoration of family life. The period of captivity had been one of social corruption for the Jewish people. Their family life had suffered blight. These reformers were much concerned about this major item in their program of spiritual recovery. The demands upon us today in the realm of family life are imperative. No proof of that fact is needed.

Chaplain Edwin L. Kirtley of the Army of Occupation in Japan tells of hearing Kagawa preaching. The great evangelist used as his subject "The Last Great Tragedy," and he took as his text the parable of the judgment as recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. It is the parable of the sheep and the goats. Kagawa was saying that the Japanese people had been through terrifying experiences, but they still had an opportunity to avoid the last great tragedy of being classed as the goats. They could still minister to the needy, feed the hungry, help the wretched and rebuild the country. If they failed in this they would degenerate into "goats"—something less than human.

This last great tragedy is facing all mankind. The dark ages are just around the corner. Man has fallen from his high estate. There is human want everywhere in the world. In the exercise of Christian love and mercy, in the vigorous and generous labor of the multitudes, is the one hope of a redeemed society and a better world.

The Three Stonecutters

By J. ROBERT GRAY

Man does not live by bread alone. Matthew 4:4.

THE STORY is told of a stranger who saw three stonecutters at work on a building. Being curious about their work he asked the first stonecutter what he was doing. The reply came quickly, "I'm working for my bread and butter." Turning to the second stonecutter the stranger put the same question. "Can't you see? I'm cutting stone," was the answer. The third stonecutter was asked the same question. He replied, "I'm building a cathedral!"

The answer of the first stonecutter was: "I'm working for my bread and butter." That is exactly what he was doing—no more and no less. He *was* working for his bread and butter. To him labor was a matter of grim necessity. At home there were mouths to be fed, and he had to earn the money to feed them. Many of us are in this category. We work out of sheer, grim necessity and work has long since ceased to be a pleasure. It has become one of the chronic pains of our life. The conditions under which we work, the grim figure of the wolf crouching at the door, the specter of coming depression—these things have taken the joy and zest from our work, so that we work only as a means of obtaining our living. Many of us go to our work heavy-hearted and slow, driven by the fear of empty stomachs. The astonishingly large number of absentees, those who "lay off for a day," is striking testimony that work for many people has lost its interest, and were it not for the necessity of earning bread and butter they would stay at home altogether. Work, a gift of God to man, has become a dreary, painful thing to many people.

The man who answers only that he is working for his bread and butter has forgotten that vital word of God that "man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Because he is interested only in the additional bread which Sunday overtime wages will provide, neither he nor his union will fight against large corporations which take the day of rest and make it a day of labor. Time-and-a-half wages earned in a steel mill are to them much more important than any rewards that may be gained through Sunday hours spent in the house of God. The "bread-and-butter laborer" has forgotten that bread and butter are not the only things by which a man lives; he has forgotten that man lives too by rest, by faith, by worship, and by a hundred other intangible things that wages can never buy.

LIFE NEEDS MORE THAN BREAD

The bread-and-butter things of life can damn and kill the soul, just as too little of those things can starve and kill the body. Too much of material things, too much of the satisfying of appetites and hungers, brings deadness and dullness of spirit and destroys the luster of life. Man does not live by bread alone—but he does sometimes die by it alone.

Again, he who works solely because of the bread and butter which his labor brings shows the strain of his labor in his features. Care and anxiety trace their trademark in his face, his heavy and plodding step is a sign of a joyless, heavy heart. He takes no pride in his work, nor does he glory in his accom-

plishments. All that matters is that he does enough work to feed his family. He may not even like his work, but he is bound to it. His work may be against his principles, but still he does it for the security that it brings.

The warmonger, the munitions maker, the numbers writer, the racketeer, the fallen woman, the thief and a host of others of the same stripe ply their age-old trades of iniquity, vice and murder—because it is their bread and butter. Where men and women work solely for their bread and butter, neither law nor conscience resides; only the desire to satisfy hunger and appetite dwells there.

I think that we can now safely cast aside the bread-and-butter idea of labor as being unworthy of the Christian ideal of work. So now we turn to the answer given by the second stonecutter.

MODERN LABOR IS MONOTONOUS

His reply, so the story goes, was curt and to the point. When asked as to what he was doing, he answered: "Can't you see? I'm cutting the stone." Here is a man whose vision is as short as his patience. His eyes are fastened upon the stone under his hands, and that stone is the center of all his labor and interest. He never lifts his eyes to the hills from whence cometh his strength—and his stone; he never has the sense of cooperation and help. His world and his work are to be found only in the stone. His vision goes only as far as the swing of his arm and the arc of his mallet. He never sees the larger thing he is building; his attention lies in the stone, in detail, in something that is small and insignificant when compared to the whole of the task.

Here, in the words of this stonecutter, is reflected much of the monotony of modern labor. This man is akin to the man who puts the fifth bolt on the head of a motor in a car assembly line in Detroit; he is a close relative of the man who punches holes in plates of battleship steel the long day through, of the woman who wearily stands by the moving belt in a canning factory. Modern labor too often means only dreary, monotonous tasks that kill incentive and initiative and have no challenge in them. One man may put the bolt in place, but the labor union says that another man must be hired to turn the nut. One man may set the nail but another must be hired to drive it. Labor is so divided into a thousand monotonous tasks that these hole-punchers, these nut-turners, these nail-drivers go through their monotonous day performing their dreary, isolated tasks. The time may come when, because of the division of tasks, there will be no machinists, no mechanics, no carpenters; only hole-punchers, nut-turners, nail-drivers—stonecutters. No man will have the vision that he is a builder; all that he will know is that he is a nut-turner, a stonecutter. Every man's task will be so individual that he will think he works in a world of his own.

And the employer? So often it matters not if his laborers have dreams, if they have creative talent:

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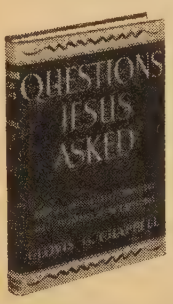

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they must operate a machine. The man must fit the machine. The iron bed of Procrustes is ancient legend, but it is still terribly modern. Procrustes was a giant who placed all his captives on a bed. If they were too short he stretched them, if they were too long he cut them down to proper size. He made them fit the bed. In our age a man must fit the machine. His talents must be confined to the pulling of a lever, the pushing of a button. If he dreams of painting pictures he must often paint houses; if he dreams of planting seeds he must often dig coal; if he dreams of carving statues he must often cut stones. Thus, talent must often die just so the stones may be cut.

Surely this cannot be the Christian ideal of labor —where a man feels himself and his job to be isolated from the jobs of others; where he feels that he is not a builder, his whole attention being centered on the stone that lies under his hand.

WORKING WITH A PURPOSE

But the third stonecutter who was asked what he was doing gives us a far different answer. He did not say that he was working for his bread and butter, nor that he was cutting stones. He answered that he was building a cathedral.

Here was a man whose work had vision and purpose. Beyond the bread and butter, beyond the unhewn stone, he could see the towers of a cathedral rising in the sun. Above the earth its shafts and pinnacles would soar; through its doors the weary and wounded of the world would pass for rest and healing. Within its walls the choirs would sing and a mighty organ would sound. The whispered prayer, the muffled sob, these would be there! What was he doing? Why, he was building a cathedral! His work would have value, purpose and worth.

Here is a weakness of much of our modern labor. Our work does not have purpose and value. We build a hundred saloons, but only one school; we build a million cars, but only a hundred homes for veterans; we make a huge battlsehip to sink a thousand men. Where is the purpose, the value of our labor? We raised and burned millions of tons of potatoes while prices soared and children died across the seas. We do not know what we build, what we do. We do not know that when we build a bomber we build a thousand coffins, that when we build a saloon we destroy a score of marriages and homes, that when we build a race track we build a slum for paupers.

But this third stonecutter knew what he was building. He was building a cathedral, a place where the dignity and worth of man could reach its zenith; a place where men might find their God again; a place where broken hearts could find healing. He knew what he was building, he was building a cathedral. This third stonecutter was following the advice Ruskin gives to us in his *Seven Lamps of Architecture*: "Therefore, when we build, let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, 'See! This our fathers did for us!' "

THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION

Then, too, this stonecutter knew that he was not working alone. The whole cathedral he could not build by himself. He knew that there were other laborers—workers in glass, organ builders, metal workers, carpenters, plumbers, painters, plasterers—many others who were building the cathedral with him. He knew that there were bosses, architects, engineers, men of money and wealth behind the cathedral and that they too were building with him. All classes and types of men would somehow be represented in that cathedral.

Here is the lost chord of modern industry and labor—cooperation. In the mills and mines and marts of our time, "cooperation" is the forgotten word. So intense is industry upon its gains, and so zealous is labor in its own advancement, that each has forgotten how to cooperate with the other. Yet, if the gains of industry are to be permanent, and if the advancement of labor is to be significant, they must cooperate. If each thinks that it and it alone

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is what counts, then the new world of which brave hearts dare to dream will go glimmering down to chaotic darkness. Selfishness shall be our god, individualism shall be our creed, and destruction shall be our end.

Therefore it becomes apparent, does it not? That this is the Christian ideal of labor. Not that men should work for bread and butter, not that men should feel themselves to be just cogs in the wheels, but that men should labor with vision and foresight and purpose—working together to lift the shafts of a better world. Labor and management must cooperate; then the world will have its bread and butter, then the dreams of men will come true, then in learning to cooperate with each other we shall learn to cooperate with God in the mighty task of building eternity into time.

A Pastoral Prayer

By FRANK HALLIDAY FERRIS

O THOU in whose presence is fulness of joy, we come here in the faith that if we commit our way to thee, thou wilt show us the path of life and empower us to walk in it. We come because we believe that the life of man and the life of God are one, that a man never comes to himself until he comes to thee, that in opening ourselves to thine influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled. Thou art a God who hidest thyself. Thou dost not force thyself upon us. We have to seek thee. But when we find thee, we find that thou hast all the time been seeking us, that the prior quest is thine.

Some here are young, awake to life's pleasures and thrills but unsaved from its perils. Help them to remember their Creator in the days of their youth before the evil days come; to keep themselves straight and clean, that their latter years may be free from the bitterness of regret.

Some are in middle life. On them fall most heavily the heat and burden of the day as they try to do their work well and carry their responsibilities without faltering. Show them that when even the youth faint and grow weary, they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength and find it equal to their need.

Some are in the sunset hour, the heat and struggle past, the day's work done. O Thou who makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice, fulfill in them the promise that at eventide there shall be light.

Some are worried, anxious, nervous, afraid. Remind them that thou hast not given us a spirit of fear but of power and love and self-control. Make them sure that whatever the morrow brings, it can bring with it nothing but thou wilt bear us through. Teach them to cast their care on thee, who carest for us.

Some are lonely and sad, so desolate they can

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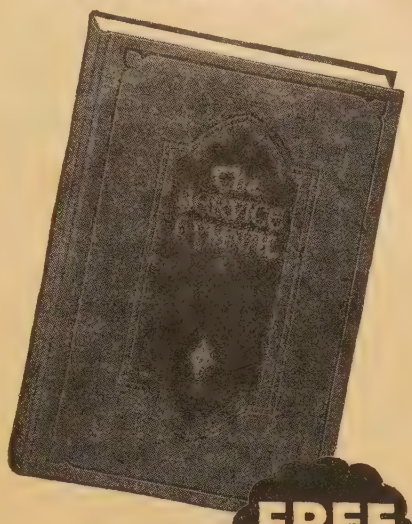

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hardly lift up their hearts even in this high hour. O thou who healest the broken in heart and bindest up their wounds, keep them beneath the covert of thy wing. Make known to them that though weeping may tarry for a night, joy cometh in the morning; that the darkness and the light are both alike to thee, that neither they nor those whom here they see no more can drift beyond thy love and care.

Some are in good health and spirit. We have food to eat and homes to shelter us, books to read and friends to love, music and art and nature to enjoy. May our gratitude for our good fortune take the form of a deep desire to serve our fellows, to help where help is needed, to befriend those who need our frindship most.

Young and old, happy and sad, we all alike need thee. Thou art our light and our salvation, our strength and our song. In thy hand are our times. In thy will is our peace. Into thy hand we commend our spirits in Jesus' name. Amen.

Choosing Your Way to Faith

By FRANKLIN D. ELMER

The love of Christ controls us. II Corinthians 5:14a.

WHEN Paul said, "The love of Christ controls us" he was using an editorial "we," referring to himself. One of the most dynamic of men, he used his great powers in the tremendous work of establishing the Christian church, and his writings became the basis for much of our Christian theology. He was able to do so much because he had made an irrevocable choice, a profound commitment which transformed his life. He was able to say: "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."

Henry Van Dyke once said, "The strong life is the broad life with a single purpose." Such was the life of Paul. He had made his choice!

A friend recounted to me the other day the story of Robinson Crusoe—when he made his last trip on his little raft to the wreck of the ship which had cast him up on this lonely isle. Seeing that the ship would soon be hopelessly shattered on the rocks, he went carefully through the supplies on board which he might take ashore with him. He found the ship's supply of gold and ran his fingers through it. As tempting as it proved to be, he turned aside from it as worthless for his circumstances, and took ashore, instead, a goodly supply of tools which would be useful. The genius of Crusoe was revealed in his choice!

OUR LIVES GUIDED BY CHOICE

We pride ourselves on being creatures of free will. Our lives are determined largely by the choices we make. None of these choices are more important to a full and abundant life than the choices in religion. Basil King has said that we can choose whether we will follow the stars by which our fathers traveled, or whether we will simply follow the route marked out by their dead campfires! We can forget the stars and go back and forth over the old trails—or we can follow the stars into new adventures and toward new conclusions which will make religion in our time a vital and living experience.

If we choose the old campfires, then religion becomes a matter of creeds and doctrines. If we choose the stars, then it becomes a matter of personal faith fashioned about the campfires of living experience to which we have ourselves set the flame.

Religion, we must remember, cannot be disassociated from people. It is like all great ideas that have their real meaning only when they are represented by people who are living them. Gandhi could have preached his thoughts about passive resistance all his life, and gained nothing. But when he lived his ideas, they had a power which transformed India and confounded the rulers of the greatest empire of our time.

CONSCIENCE IS THE GUIDE

Martin Luther expressed this truth vividly in the early days of the Protestant Reformation when he said: "Thou must not place thy decision on the pope, nor on any other person. Thou must thyself be so skillful that thou canst say: God says this and not that. Thou must bring thine own conscience into play so that thou mayst boldly and defiantly cry: This is God's word! On it I will risk body and life, and a hundred thousand necks if I had them."

Still another writer has pointed out that when an effort has been made in the world to stamp out any idea or doctrine that has been held to be false, it is done by destroying people. You cannot behead a doctrine or burn it at the stake. So people have been beheaded and burned at the stake to get rid of the ideas they represented. It is even so with religion. It is not something abstract—it is people. If there is any Christianity in Flint, Michigan, it is not in any set of statistics or in any book in the library. It is in people.

Some people are Republicans, and there is no Republican party without them. Some are Democrats, and there is no Democratic party without them.

Some of us are trying to be Christians, and we must remember that there is no Christianity in the world without people like us! We are it—or else it is not.

If there is weakness in Christianity it is because we are weak Christians. It is because we have for so long lacked a deep and transforming commitment to the faith we profess. We have not made a clean cut choice.

It is true, perhaps, that to altogether too many of us God has been just a sort of pleasant old gentleman who lives off in the country somewhere. We have thought of him as having a pleasant flower garden to which we can go, and a lovely woods through which we may walk, and some fine vistas for viewing the sunsets. But, of course, when we return to our normal lives we say good-by to God—for what would he possibly know about our business or the problems of our job?

WHAT DO WE THINK ABOUT JESUS?

Have we too often thought of Jesus as a sweet idealist, a sort of a glorified social worker who knew a lot about being nice to people, but who, of course, had none of the competence of a modern banker, or the skill of a modern lawyer, or the executive ability of a modern industrialist? Have we felt that Jesus was nice to know about, but that after all he did make something of a failure and we wouldn't want to end up in the shameful way he did? How much better, we have thought, to die in bed and be respected by everybody!

And isn't it true that frequently religion has been for us a vague longing for something like an automatic pilot? Even as the officers on the trans-Atlantic planes set the gadget in the cockpit and let the automatic mechanism guide the plane to its distant destination, so we would like religion to be a gadget we can set, and then go on about our business knowing that the automatic pilot will get us where we want to go without our bothering about it very much.

But there is no such thing in religion as an automatic pilot. Jesus did no such service as this even for his closest friends. He did not make their decisions, or decide how they should express their beliefs. They were inclined to ask him for instance, "Master who are you?" But he always turned the question right back to them. "Who do you say that I am?" They played around with the idea that he might be Elijah returned, or a new prophet. But finally, out of their own decisions they said, "Thou are the Christ." The same question comes to us. Whatever Jesus may have been it doesn't make any difference for our religion. What does make a difference is what we say that he is to us!

This is even more true of God. We have been handed no encyclopedia describing God. We must find the answers for ourselves. The great truths about him are written in the very fabric of the universe and in life all about us. We must discover

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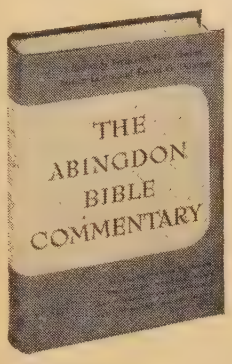

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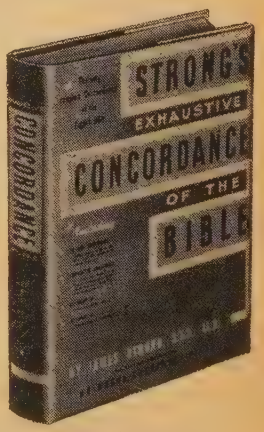

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them for ourselves. The quality and the effectiveness of religion in the world is not determined by what God may actually be, but by what you and I say he is! We can be pagans or we can be thoroughly Christian. What we are does not change God—but it makes a vast amount of difference to us. It is as though the heart of the universe were forever crying out to us, "Who do you say that I am?" By the answer we choose to make with our freedom of will we determine the nature of our own religion.

The religion we adopt by the choices we make will be one of two general kinds. It may be a religion of escape. With this kind of religion, when life gets too hard we turn and look in another direction and see what we want to see. This is the religion of mythology and of fabricated theology. It provides many people with what seems be real comfort. It takes attention from the terrors and difficulties and sorrows of this life and directs it toward another life altogether. But this is the kind of religion that is forever fighting against science. It provides comfort only so long as we do not test it by the basic facts of living. It becomes something apart from this life rather than something that is a part of this life.

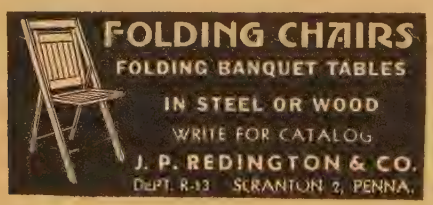
REAL RELIGION DOES NOT FLEE

The other kind of religion is one that does not turn aside from the tough problems, but rather probes down through those problems to the causes and meanings behind them. It seeks to discover the substantial and unchangeable truth that underlies our lives. This kind of religion has no quarrel with science, for science is its handmaid in the search for truth. This kind of religion demands an open mind forever seeking new clues to the meaning of life, forever striving to see life whole. It follows the stars rather than the burned out campfires. It has its feet planted firmly on the foundations of the natural laws of the universe, and follows the eternal star of man's pilgrimage from ignorance to knowledge, from beastliness to divinity, from pettiness to greatness, from despair to hope. It recognizes that even as "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera," so also "in everything God works for good with those who love him."

In 1941, as we flew at 16,000 feet across a high pass in the Andes, the steward on the plane suddenly shouted, "The Christ, the Christ," and the pilot dipped the wing of the plane sharply so we could look straight below us. There, on the high boundary between Chile and Argentina, stood the figure of the Christ of the Andes, a statue erected early in this century from the bronze of melted cannon which had been used by these nations in warfare against each other. It commemorated a peace which came after half a century of bitter wrangling. Below the statue were inscribed the words:

> "Sooner shall these mountains crumble into dust than shall Argentines and Chileans break the peace which they have pledged at the feet of Christ the Redeemer."

Such a statement speaks of the highest law man knows. And it recognizes man's knowledge of the fact that if he will look down through his troubles to the very foundations of life he will find profound and basic laws, established in the very order of the universe, by which he can live at peace—but which, if broken, will lead to certain disaster. This is the kind of proposition to which we must commit ourselves—to say, with Paul, "The love of Christ controls us."



Evidence of Reunion After Death

By LESLIE D. WEATHERHEAD

(From a sermon preached at City Temple, London)

I THINK it is only fair that I should offer from my own work—a thing which every minister could do—the evidence for reunion after death which so often impresses those of us who sit at the bedside of the dying. Again and again the weary invalid, who may have lain unconscious for days and in great human weakness for months, has raised himself from his bed, stretched out his arms and, with a light on his face never seen at any other time, has called the name of one dear to him, who perhaps had been dead for many years. If this is a trick of the brain it is a cruel one. For myself it would require more credulity to believe that this was a trick of the brain than to believe that, in the hour of passing, the hands of those they love who have gone before are stretched out to the dying, to welcome them into the eternal land.

And, indeed, is this not just what we should expect? If before birth we had the faculty to anticipate

at all and to wonder at what was going to happen, we should be as frightened of birth as some people are of death; afraid of the cold, strange world into which we were going to pass from the darkness and comfort of the womb. Yet there are hands stretched out to welcome us, eyes that gaze lovingly into our own and a voice that soothes our baby fears; for God the loving Father has ordained it thus.

So it will be at death. Loving hands will welcome us and loving eyes will look into our own in remembrance; and, what is more, we shall be as strangers returning. It is birth into this world that is exile. It is the eternal world that is our home country. We shall not go to it as foreigners who have to learn a new language, but as men and women who are returning home.

Then just as the Highlander, back in his beloved Scotland from business life in London, drops into the Gaelic within a day of reaching the ingle nook in the cottage deep in the Scottish glen, so I believe that to enter the eternal world is to pass through an experience of incredible beauty and happiness.

Share Your Christmas

By GERDA SCHAIRER

THE WORLD CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL, in its fourth year, has made it possible for American boys and girls, their teachers and friends, to send nearly one million W.C.F. presents to children overseas. These beautfully wrapped gifts have been distributed without discrimination at the World Christmas Festival in former years celebrated simultaneously on December 15th in fourteen war-torn countries.

We call on you, old and young, to help to bring Christmas joy and happiness again this year to children who have suffered so much. Every little gift is a token of friendship and will help to build friendship among the children of the world.

The size and value of the gifts is not important, just so they are real Christmas presents. They can be earmarked for any one of the European countries. Without such earmarking the parcels go to a country where the need is greatest. Pack in one gift boxes for one country, and write the name of that country on the outside of the box.

Please send ten cents for each pound of parcel weight to the World Christmas Festival, sponsored by Church World Service, 214 East 21st Street, New York 10, New York, to help defray crating and shipping costs. (Write for 1948 leaflet for further information.)

To each present a little tag should be attached with the donor's name and address clearly written on the one side, and on the reverse side indicate whether it is for girl or boy, and of what age.

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Teaching a Congregation to Worship

By WESLEY M. WESTERBERG

A MINISTER who undertakes to teach a congregation to worship God must fill a triple role. He must be a person, a priest and a prophet. To begin with he must be a worshipper himself in the midst of the performance of his "priestly" duties. His own deep convictions about worship must be evident even though he is involved in the mechanics of the service. He must listen for a voice which is not his own and actually receive the Presence that fills the temple. Whatever he may do with the accustomed order of service he must show his people that he is not asking them to go where he has never traveled—that he is not playing a game but approaching God with his own human needs.

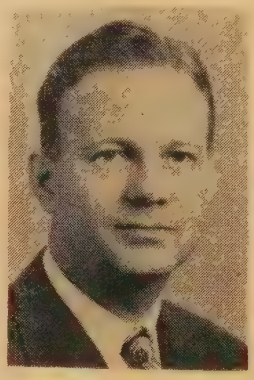
● *Skill Is Necessary*

Part of a minister's success in teaching a congregation to worship will lie in the way in which he discharges his craft. He must be skilled in handling objects and patterns. For this he need not be a sacramentarian. In the light of the Christian Gospel he is free to regard things, even the vessels used in common worship, with a sense of reverence remembering that "everything created by God is good," and is "to be consecrated by the word of God and prayer." The minister must be so adept at moving about among the forms and patterns of worship that they become the servants of the spirit and are never thought of as ends in themselves. The more nimbly and less obtrusively he moves, the more he is freed from the limitations of form for the great encounter which is his main task.

When a members of a congregation speak of the cross and the altar as "decorations," the minister must show them by his every action that some things, very common in origin, are redeemed from careless disregard. He must make them see that by consecration and use they become the bread of life. He needs only to call attention to the reverence with which they regard their own family pew to show them that they have already unconsciously made some things sacred. From there they can be led to accept in their worship other things which have become holy for millions of others since Christ's day.

Teaching worship in most churches still calls for the prophet. The minister will discover that he is often a lone voice crying in a secular wilderness and that there are lesser gods on the altar of his church. He may find that Yahweh has been made into a Baal. When this happens the minister will be tempted to "give them what they want," announce the tawdry hymns and let pagan travesties go on. But to do this would be to rob the people of the experience of true Christian worship. Like the prophet of the past he will have to put his faith in a "remnant" and proceed, quietly and unostentatiously, to share his convictions with his people.

There are a number of ways to do this. The minister can use some instrument of evaluation with a selected group of people to find with them the strength and weakness of the worship practices of his particular congregation. This will give the group a chance to question the order they are already using and ask what it seeks to accomplish. Some of them will be surprised to learn that it intends anything at all. Every minister has opportunities to discuss worship informally with church organizations. Some storms may arise but some great dawns will be seen as well. The people will discover that something may be learned about worship . At the same time the pastor will learn how little or how much they know.



W. M. WESTERBERG

● *Use Church Groups*

However, simple a church may be architecturally, it can justify the existence of an altar or chancel guild which will exercise good taste in the arrangement of flowers, the decoration of the church for Christian festivals, the care of the altar and its appointments and the preparation of the elements for Holy Communion. Giving such a group these specific responsibilities and informing them of the reasons for an orderly setting will avoid many atrocities. One minister, on entering his church one Sunday, discovered a tub of daisies in the baptismal font. On another occasion, on Mother's Day, he discovered cages of canaries set not too strategically around the aisles. After instruction in these matters there will be genuine compensation for the minister's efforts such as I experienced when one of the ladies of my church, after making the altar ready for communion, asked me to kneel with her in the quiet of the sanctuary where she, for a moment, became the priest and in her Cornish accent consecrated to God's use the elements her own hands had touched. This was an experience well worth remembering.

Young people may be brought into the church worship in a number of ways. Participation in *conducting* worship is so crucial for youth that the minister will have to create responsibilities where none exist. He may have to lower the age standard in the adult choir, if necessary, and have processionals on special occasions if for no other reason than to harness the two most obstreperous youngsters of the youth department to the standards that herald the entrance of the choirs. Even the most indifferent young people will welcome the chance to light the candles, if candles are used, open the Bible before the service begins and, if they can be trusted, place the sermon manuscript on the pulpit.

● *New Hymnals Help*

The purchase of new hymnals is an excellent time to train a church in the best traditions of sacred music. A new hymn may be selected each month or even each Sunday after it has been used as an anthem by the choir the week before. The minister may lead the congregation in exploring hitherto unused parts of the hymnal such as those in which the chants are found. To do a thorough job in the matter of music it may be necessary to make a bonfire of all old "song books."

Sermons often help to explain the procedure of worship. There is a variety of themes in the pattern of worship itself—adoration, confession, forgiveness and (What could be more timely for the financial campaign?) dedication. There are other suggestive possibilities for sermons in parts of the church building—such as the altar itself, the cross, the pulpit, the font and—what is always with us—the empty pew. The opportunity created by special services such as weddings and

funerals must not be overlooked. Every conference with engaged couples making plans for thir wedding gives the minister an opportunity to hold up the marriage ceremony as a service of worship. He may therefore suggest a type of music that is fitting and show how the mechanics of the ceremony can be kept dignified and natural.

There will be bereaved families who will be grateful for the suggestion from the minister that the usual "funeral songs" be not sung at all—or the personal virtues of the loved one lauded to the skies. They can be shown that the simple act of closing the casket during the service is a sign that "we look not at things seen, but at things not seen." Thus may the dignity of true worship minister to grief.

If the minister tries to do these things in his church—and at the same time explains to his people his reasons for them, he can teach his congregation and lead them in time to reality in worship.

Why Don't Protestants Go to Church?

By FREDERICK W. KATES

WHY don't Protestants go to church? Discounting the customary excuses there are three chief reasons. Protestants do not think attending worship is important. They have not been trained to believe they have committed a serious sin when they do not go. They just do not want to go.

The first thing we can do is stress the importance of church attendance, not by lamentations over our meager congregations on Sunday, but by stressing the fateful importance of public worship so far as the future of Protestant Christianity and our nation are concerned.

It's a sad thing for America that present-day Protestants, descendants of people who came to these shores above all other things to enjoy freedom of worship now interpret "freedom of worship" to mean the liberty not to worship at all. It is indeed high time that we who are clergymen and parents arrest the trend of making church-going an optional requirement of the Christian life. Our generation is reaping the "pay-off" of decades of casual and easy-going indifference about church attendance. The tragic weakness of the Protestant churches so far as molding and guiding our national life and the resulting spiritual impoverishment of our people and nation are concerned is glaring testimony of the folly of our ways.

The second thing we can do is to train our people that going to church is just as important to them as it is to Roman Catholics. No matter what else they'd rather do and for whatever reasons they do it, our Romanist neighbors do go to church, and their example shames us. We may not like the things they believe and do but, like it or not, they are strong and waxing stronger in our midst, while we limp along handicapped because two-thirds of our membership seldom gets near our churches except on Christmas and Easter, or when some spectacular event is scheduled, unless to ask a favor, or get a "hand-out" from the parson.

If we clergymen have not been teaching our people that church-attendance is just as important a matter to Protestantism as it is to Romanism, we are grievously guilty. Every churchman by whatsoever name he may be called is committed to a threefold pledge, namely, to worship God in his church every Sunday, to say his prayers, and to give and labor for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. If Protestant Christians haven't been taught this and today are not being taught this we, the clergy, are unpardonably remiss.

Rome uses threats of excommunication, discipline and damnation to keep her people going to Confession and Mass. If the Roman church operated on the same laissez-faire basis as Protestants where church going is concerned, they'd be in as bad a plight as we are. Let it be put up to Protestants in plain terms: Do they propose to attend public worship and keep their church strong on a voluntary basis, or must Protestantism adopt Rome's methods?

The third thing we can do and must do is make the worship of our churches so beautiful, inspiring, elevating, and vital that our people will not want to stay away. There is little point in carping at our absentee members that they are despicable ingrates, accepting all the blessings God bestows on them and never feeling any compunction to offer God something in return. The positive approach is better. We must make our services of worship, our sermons, our music, our parish programs and activities, so alive and vital and beautiful that people will not want to stay away.

Finally, American Protestants must be made to see this is a mighty serious matter. If church-going is not important to Protestants and if they are not training their children by word and example to consider it important, they are casting their votes to close the doors of the Protestant churches of America, to forfeit the liberty we now enjoy, and to turn the nation over to whatever sinister forces or individuals can then readily take command.

Either the public worship of Protestant America will wax enthusiastic and popular again, or we may as well admit our spiritual bankruptcy and quit deceiving ourselves that we want America to continue being a Christian nation of free men.

Speaking Of Sermons—

THE periodic "special day" sermon keeps cropping up on the minister's study calendar as a real headache. That is why so many preachers welcome cantatas, pageants and special speakers on the red letter Sundays that come faster and faster as the years roll around. But the Labor Day Sermon is a problem that cannot be solved for the preacher by the choir director. Even though he knows that a large portion of his congregation will be out of town for the week end and he has to get down and dig for a new idea to give to the faithful few who will attend.

One minister of national note told me the other day that he solves the problem very simply. He just plans his vacation to cover the first Sunday in September and lets his assistant worry about it. As a result he has not had to preach a Labor Sunday sermon in twenty-five years. In that respect he is wiser than the minister Dr. Rockwell Harmon Potter of Hartford, Connecticut, has been known to tell about who came home from his August vacation so completely relaxed that he could not get his mind settled down to the problem of a sermon. He fretted and stewed all week with no success.

A Basket of Summer Fruit

Finally, in desperation, he decided to string together a series of stories about his holiday. Since he was a good Presbyterian he knew he had to have a text and hoped that by finding a good one the absence of an outline would go unnoticed by his congregation. The problem was to find a text appropriate to the miscellaneous nature of the discourse. A happy inspiration led him to Amos 8:1. On Sunday morning he began in traditional fashion: "My text this morning is, 'A basket of summer fruit', Amos eight, one."

He did not understand the reason for

the titter that ran through the pews until it was explained to him afterwards. The following week he still could not get settled down to study and discovered that the minister of a neighboring church was in the same difficulty. So they exchanged pulpits and our friend used the same sermon. However, this time he wanted to avoid the boner he had made the week before and, noting that the same phrase was repeated in the following verse, changed his text. This time he began by saying: "My text this morning is 'A basket of summer fruit', Amos, eight, two."

The Unemployed Carpenter

There are some ministers, however, that get down and do some real work on a labor message. In addition to the two which we offer in the Pulpit in this issue there are two more which are worthy of especial mention.

One of them is by Alfred W. Hurst of Cleveland Park Congregational Church, Washington, D. C. We have had this in the hopper for a long time and even though we didn't have room to print it in full in this issue the idea is too good to overlook here. It deals with the plight of "the unemployed Carpenter," who comes from Nazareth. This overlooked workman, says Dr. Hurst, is not without a job because of any unwillingness to work or because of any inability—in fact he is ready and waiting to help anyone that will ask him in the building of a house that will form an impregnable shelter. The trouble is that his cost and his standards of workmanship are too high and he will build only on his own terms—"But if we will put the unemployed Carpenter of Nazareth to work with his tools of righteousness and justice, good will and brotherhood, we shall see rise against the skyline of man's world the house of security for all."

Work and Worship

By a coincidence the Pulpit has received two sermons on the Labor Day theme both of which are based on the illustration of the "Three Stonecutters." In addition to the sermon by that name which is given in full in this issue, there is another equally good by Wilbur C. Christians of La Grange (Illinois) Baptist Church. This manuscript starts with stating W. E. Hocking's principle of "alternation," and comments: "Life at its best oscillates between the poles of work and worship." The author declares: "When we alternate our attention between the task at hand and the worship of the Almighty, we become new people with new attitudes and new powers. Christian worship leads men and women to see the main objective of labor which is the serving of God's purpose for their lives. It is the realization of this purpose that makes us say with the workman in the illustration: "Sir, I am building a cathedral."

Where Did Jesus Live?

A new twist for an old text is offered by Paul Morrison of Trinity Methodist Church, Detroit, in a sermon entitled "Where Do You Live?" It is based on the query in John 1:38 and ends with a universal application of Jesus' answer in the following verse. "Where did Jesus live?" asks Dr. Morrison. There are several answers. He lived near God —who always dwells with need. He lived by a garden and close to the hills —for the things of nature were always with him and the hills near by gave him strength. He lived at "Rock Haven," and not at "Sandy Reef," for his whole life rested on the sure foundation of faith. But it is not enough to know where Jesus lives—he challenges us to come and see where he lives. He welcomes us to live with him and close to God.

On Leaving Galilee

"All life comes under two categories," says Charles F. Banning of the Central Baptist Church, Norwich, Connecticut, "the compulsory and the voluntary." Most things are compulsory, he declares, in a sermon based on Matthew 19:1, but in a few we do have a choice. Jesus faced an important choice when he left his home in Galilee to go to hostile Judea. But he chose to go because he saw that what he had been living for was worth dying for—something needed to be done in Judea that was more important than what he was doing in Galilee. For him the first mile was in Galilee—in a life of teaching and service. Judea was the second mile that led to a cross. "Most of us," says Dr. Banning, "would have stayed in Galilee. We say that one must look out for himself and go where he can better himself. One must do what he can do best and enjoy it. Jesus would not agree. The easy way, the pleasant way, the safe way, the profitable way, and the popular way are not Christian ways. The abundant life is the disciplined life; and the life lived for higher values, the Christ-centered life, the life that follows God's will rather than seeking one's own personal desires." Thus we must choose—for this is within the category of the voluntary things—whether we will stay in the safety of Galilee or follow the path of Jesus no matter if it leads us to a cross. G.H.B.

Sermon Illustrations

By MARSHALL WINGFIELD

WHEN the President of the United States broadcasts a message, many people hear his words. To each of these the President is present. He is expressed in millions of places at one time but he is not divided into a million persons; nor is he spread out so as to cover all the places where his listeners are. His instruments are spread out, but not his concentrated self-conscious will which we call the spirit. His spirit remains a definite personal will, both to itself and to the listeners regardless of their numbers.

A Wise Mother

A mother was trying to teach her son that God dwells with the world just as our spirits dwell with our bodies, and that he is in all parts of the world at the same time. After asking him to imagine his body as the world she pinched his cheek and arm and leg, asking each time, "Are you there?" Then the little fellow said: "Mother, if God is everywhere why wouldn't it hurt him to cut a tree as well as to cut a person?" The wise mother asked the lad: "Which would hurt you more —to cut your finger or your finger nail; to cut your hair or your head?" Then she told him that we live in our fingernails as well as in our fingers, and in our hair as well as in our heads, but we do not live in our hair or our nails as fully as in other parts of the body. So God lives in the universe but he lives more fully in us than in the other parts of his body—and is more easily hurt in us than anywhere else.

Two Ways To Return Home

The spiritual world, like the physical, is a sphere, and though one may journey away from the Father's house, he is destined to return. G. K. Chesterton used to say, "There are two ways of getting home: one is to stay there and the other is to walk around the whole world until you come back." Whether aware of it or not, every soul in this world is homeward bound. On the road home the son who has received his inheritance and is bound for the far country meets the poor wanderer returning in rags to his father's house. The outward bound son may not know it but he too is destined to return. Though he may take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost bounds, even there a hand shall find him and bring him back. God would not be God if any soul could forever stay away from home.

The Part That Went To Heaven

A Japanese legend says a pious Buddhist died and was told on arrival in heaven that it would be well for him to look around his new home. Kwanon, goddess of mercy would be his guide. He obeyed and soon came to a place where heaps of gold and precious stones blinded his eyes; then to a place where the angels' songs delighted the ear and then to a place where lotus blossoms bloomed and birds of paradise filled the air with sweet music. All this was delightful and easy to understand but next they came to a room that looked like a shop. Along the walls were shelves on which were piles of what looked like dried mushrooms. He asked if these could be the food of the angels. Kwanon bade him look closer and he saw, to his horror, that they were really human ears. Then the goddess explained: "They are the ears of the people who on earth went diligently to church and listened to the preaching with pleasure, but whose deeds were so evil that after death they went to hell and only their ears reached heaven. The Buddhist's eyes sought another part of the shelves and came to rest on what looked like small dried fish. "And what are these?" he asked. Kwanon replied: "Those are the tongues of men who in life were very skillful in telling others what it was right they should do, tongues which were active in praising God, but who thought so little of what they said that their lives were evil. Of course when they died, only their tongues came to heaven."

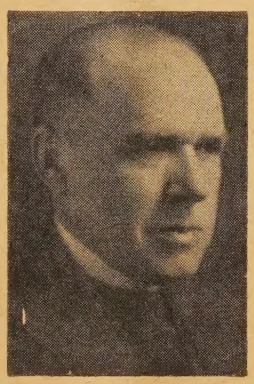
Finding God

Familiar to the rural Virginia scene of my boyhood was a little green covered volume called Barker's Almanic, issued for free distribution by a manufacturer of horse and cattle powders. Especially interesting to the children were the generous pages of puzzle pictures. There would be, for example, a little boy beside a great tree in a deep forest. In the far background was a house made small by distance and beneath the picture the words: "This little boy is lost. His father is looking for him. Puzzle: find the lad's father." And that was indeed a puzzle. You turned the picture in every conceivable position, but the father was nowhere to be seen. Hopelessly you put the almanac aside. After a while you glanced at the picture there on the table where you left it in your defeat, and saw as plainly as the table itself the shadowed outline of the missing father. You wondered how you could have overlooked him for now you could see nothing else. The irregular skyline formed his head and shoulders, the branches of the trees made his body and the tree trunks were his legs. He was so immense he was out of all proportion to the size of the boy and the house. That is why you missed him at first. You were not looking for so great a man.

When we come into the deep forest called sorrow we look behind every tree and shrub for some sign of God's presence. "He must be here somewhere," we say. And he *is* here, not somewhere, but everywhere. He is the picture, and the reason we do not see him is because he is out of all proportion to the little being for whom we are searching to put in our little house which our little minds have conceived to be his home.

Man's Kinship with God

When as a lad I read the greatest novel ever written—Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*—I wept with sorrow for Jean Valjean as I came to that page which makes one see him weeping. But one should read that page with joy, for there had been a time when Jean Valjean could not weep. One day, as he watched a boy at play, he asked



MARSHALL WINGFIELD

God to help him feel again as he had felt long ago when he pressed his cheek against his mother's. God answered Valjean's prayer, and then he could weep. He recovered man's best badge of kinship to God—tears.

Sorrows of Man

Some of man's sorrows grow out of the fact that man himself is unfinished. It is through the life experiences which man calls cruel that he is being made complete. Every struggle man has had with the elements has made him stronger. He has never risen very high in those lands where soft climate and prodigality of nature have made life easy. Where he has had to struggle with a harsh environment, he has been at his best. Scientists tell us that thirty million years ago, in the palezoic age, the dominant form of life on earth was the three lobed, shell ringed creature we call the tribolite. If there was any development in the tribolite during thirty million years, it was merely in the growth of some of the creatures from an inch long tribolite to a foot long tribolite. Encased in its shell-ribbed armor, the tribolite was immune to hurts, but it was also immune to development. Toward the end of the palezoic age nature took the bony substance from the outside of the tribolite and put it on the inside as if to say: "You have not improved in thirty million years of safety, now I shall subject you to pain and see what that will do for you." The exchange of protective shell for a backbone brought dangers which the tribolites had never known, but the vertebrate method, with its sensitivity to pain, did something that the hard shell method had never been able to do—it started the tribolite forward. If nature had not replaced the shell with a backbone, there might have been another thirty million years of tribolites. The removal of the shall removed the old element of safety, but it gave greater flexibility and freedom of movement and greater ease of adjustment. Subjection to pain necessitated the development of the qualities which we call courage, initiative, intelligence and affection. These qualities the tribolite did not need so long as the shell remained. There is much talk nowadays of guaranteeing to man that he shall have security, but nothing could strike a harder blow than the removal of danger by giving him a protective shell. It is danger that develops the finer qualities of man, it is pain that pushes progress.

Teaching Birds To Sing

Jean Paul Richter tells of an old method of teaching pet birds to sing. The cage was darkened by covering it with a black cloth. Then there was the making of music in a room near by. He imagines one of these birds saying, "Ah, how unhappy were I in this night, but for those melodies which make their way to me through the imprisoning darkness. I will repeat these them until I have stamped them on my heart. Then shall I be able to comfort myself in the darkness." Then Richter adds, "O man, how oft dost thou complain of the gloom which overshadows thy days! And yet what cause hast thou for complaint, unless thou wilt not learn wisdom from suffering? When the curtain is taken away, thou shalt see that it was purposely contrived so that thou mightest, like the little warbler, learn the airs which were sent to thee in darkness. For what is the whole sum of life's veiling and unveiling, but instruction for the immortal spirit. When the curtain falls away, then shall the soul be the better fitted for the realm of happier melodies."

You Can Lead in Your Profession

PROBABLY you have known pastors who have taken unpromising parishes and in a short time have revitalized the seemingly careless and indolent congregation. They pay off the old debts, beautify the church with new windows —new pews—or new lighting; perhaps start a building campaign for a new church or parsonage.

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